



1 **YAKIMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
 2 **(GWAC)**

3 **MEETING SUMMARY**

4 **Thursday, March 1, 2018 – 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

5 *Yakima County Roads Maintenance Conference Room*
 6 *1216 South 18th Street, Yakima, WA 98901*

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 8 *Note: This document is only a summary of issues and actions of this meeting. It is not intended to be*
 9 *a transcription of the meeting, but an overview of points raised and responses from Yakima County*
 10 *and Groundwater Advisory Committee members. It may not fully represent the ideas discussed or*
 11 *opinions given. Examination of this document cannot equal or replace attendance.*

12 **I. Call to Order:** This meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM by Vern Redifer, Facilitator.

Member	Seat	Present	Absent
Stuart Turner	Agronomist, Turner and Co.,		✓
Chelsea Durfey			✓
Bud Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1	✓	
Kathleen Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1 (alternate)	✓	
Patricia Newhouse	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2	✓	
Sue Wedam	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2 (alternate)		✓
Doug Simpson	Irrigated Crop Producer		✓
Jean Mendoza	Friends of Toppenish Creek	✓	
Eric Anderson	Friends of Toppenish Creek (alternate)		✓
Jan Whitefoot	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation		✓
Jim Dyjak	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation (alternate)	✓	
Steve George	Yakima County Farm Bureau	✓	
Frank Lyall	Yakima County Farm Bureau (alternate)	✓	
Jason Sheehan	Yakima Dairy Federation	✓	
Dan DeGroot	Yakima Dairy Federation (alternate)	✓	
Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control	✓	
	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control (alternate)		
Laurie Crowe	South Yakima Conservation District	✓	

Rodney Heit	South Yakima Conservation District (alternate)		✓
John Van Wingerden III	Port of Sunnyside	✓	
Rand Elliott	Yakima County Board of Commissioners	✓	
Vern Redifer	Yakima County Board of Commissioners (alternate)	✓	
Myers, Holly	Yakima Health District		✓
Ryan Ibach	Yakima Health District (alternate)		✓
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center		✓
Lucy Edmondson	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	✓	
Nick Peak	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (alternate)		✓
Elizabeth Sanchey	Yakama Nation		✓
Stuart Crane	Yakama Nation (alternate)	✓	
Gary Bahr	WA Department of Agriculture		✓
Perry Beale	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)	✓	
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health	✓	
Sheryl Howe	WA Department of Health (alternate)		✓
David Bowen	WA Department of Ecology	✓	
Sage Park	WA Department of Ecology (alternate)		✓
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative	✓	
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		✓
Jessica Black	Heritage University	✓	
Alexander V. Alexiades	Heritage University (alternate)		✓
Matt Bachmann	USGS		✓

13 **II. Welcome, Meeting Overview and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 5:00
 14 pm. After the customary introductions, Vern reviewed the agenda. The meeting summaries
 15 from December 7th, 2017 and February 15th, 2018 were approved as presented by the GWAC.
 16 A member brought up the “No Action” scenario described in WAC 173-100, and asked what
 17 progress had been made in assessing that. There was some discussion on how it was difficult
 18 to make projections into the future based on constantly changing agricultural practices, and
 19 whether the existing past data was voluminous enough to make reliable projections.

20
 21 **III. Second Draft of the GWMA Program:** Jim Davenport thanked group members for their
 22 feedback on the first draft of the GWMA program, and drew their attention to the revised
 23 and expanded second draft. The sections on geology, hydrogeology, and topography had
 24 been completely rewritten, and more history had been added to the land use section. In
 25 addition, appendices containing best management practices recommended by the Irrigated

26 Ag and Livestock/CAFO working groups had been added at the end. The entire document
27 would be made available to the group electronically. The full list of Best Management
28 Practices had not been included in the draft. Jim asked members if they wanted this to be
29 part of the final document, but no decision was reached. Jim urged members to get any
30 comments they might have to him by March 16th.

31

32 **IV. Consider & Discuss Potential Recommendations:** Jim Davenport directed the group's
33 attention to the spreadsheet of strategies derived from last year's meetings. Particularly, he
34 emphasized the importance of agencies responding to the "Cost" and "Time" columns with
35 their estimates so the group could set priorities more effectively when requesting money
36 from the legislature.

37

38 Some members asked whether regulations were being considered as part of the strategies list. Jim
39 replied that any alternatives with new regulations were rejected by the group last year.
40 Members pointed out that the language in some strategies suggests a regulatory approach,
41 for example, #13 says "WSDA: Adopt regulations listing Lower Yakima Valley GWMA-specific
42 BMPs", #15 says "Improve composting regulations", and #s 21-30 have language about
43 "Limit" and "Require". Another member passed out materials, one of which was titled "Vital
44 Elements of a GWMA", arguing for more attention to volatilization and atmospheric
45 deposition. While it would be possible, if the GWAC were to come to consensus, to
46 recommend changes of existing regulations, state agencies are often reluctant to do so
47 because once you open up one rule, you've potentially opened others. Ecology posited that
48 the best way to notify agencies about the need for regulatory updates was to write up a white
49 paper identifying specific problems and solutions.

50

51 A member raised concerns about #46, "Develop and implement Nutrient Management Plans"
52 for irrigated agriculture, wondering how this would be enforced given the way the law is
53 currently written for dairy operations. Another member was concerned about #5, "Develop
54 educational materials that could be elected by instructors at 8-12 levels about aquifer
55 protection, groundwater and best management practices", observing that teachers are
56 already being asked to incorporate a lot of different materials into their lesson plans.

57

58 A member recalled that the GWAC had agreed not to proceed with proposed strategies and
59 recommendations until cost data is available, so as to better prioritize solutions. Jim
60 Davenport expressed concerns that Ecology might not certify the program if it did not have
61 cost data, and urged agencies to forward on their best estimates in the next 60 days.

62

63 **V. Purpose-Built Wells:** Vern stated that the County is still working on the purpose-built well
64 maps. At present, staff is busy identifying county right-of-way along the proposed sites. A
65 member asked whether the group would get to 30 wells as planned. Vern wasn't sure, but
66 the way the contract is being discussed is to do a minimum of 20 wells, and then ask for prices
67 on the rest. If it was too expensive to do all 30 wells, they would be dropped from the list,
68 starting with #30, then #29, etc. Members also asked about the USGS wells, which Vern was
69 waiting for approval from USGS to share. Regarding analysis of the purpose-built wells, USGS
70 had offered to analyze the data using their methods for \$75,000 with a \$10,000 match.

71

72 **VI. Program Expenditures:** Following up on the February 15 GWAC meeting, Vern asked if
73 anyone wanted to discuss the group's expenditures in more detail. A member wanted to
74 know more information on how the various contract dollars went. Vern offered to show the
75 invoices from the various contracts to the member. He advised that the easiest way would
76 be to set up an appointment to come in and review the invoices and ask questions of staff as
77 needed.

78

79 **VII. Public Comment:** A member of the audience suggested that with the contraction of farm
80 prices in the Midwest, it would only be a matter of time before those trends carried over to
81 the Northwest, with a concurrent decline in commercial fertilizer purchased, and less nitrate
82 application. Long-term, as more farmland develops into residential property, the amount of
83 fertilizer will decline as well. He also felt that effective regulations depend on trust between
84 regulators and the regulated, and that onerous regulations do not allow for that trust to
85 develop.

86

87 **VIII. Next Meeting:** April 5, 2018.

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89 **IX. Next Steps:** 1) The March 15th GWAC Meeting was cancelled for lack of subject matter that
90 would be ready to discuss. 2) The Second Draft GWMA Program will be made available to
91 members electronically. Members will send their comments to Jim Davenport by March 16th.
92 3) Agency representatives will get cost and time estimates on the GWMA Strategies to Jim
93 Davenport before the next GWAC meeting.

94

95 **X. Meeting Summary** approved by the GWAC on May 3, 2018.